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thinks they are not what they should be. Most of the criticisms are well taken, but not all of them are expressed conservatively and judiciously.

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RYAN, JOHN A. *Distributive Justice: The Right and Wrong of Our Present Distribution of Wealth.* Pp. xviii, 442. Price, \$1.50. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916.

KLEENE, G. A. *Profit and Wages: A Study in the Distribution of Income.* Pp. iv, 171. Price, \$1.25. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916.

These volumes alike attest the return of economic theory to a formal consideration of the problems of welfare. They have more in common with the classics in which ethical considerations were explicit than with the more modern positive studies in which they are implicit.

Dr. Ryan essays the task of passing upon the justice of the existing distributive scheme. To that end he grounds an ably sustained and highly articulate argument upon the double basis of the economics of neo-classicism and the ethics of established catholicism. The materials and criteria from these sources together lead him to the conclusion that each of the traditional shares in distribution, rent, interest, profits, and wages, is justified, but that each is susceptible to abuse. Towards the eradication of "wrongs" he advocates a certain amount of state interference, presumably upon the basis of the existing institutional system. But this is evidently a mere makeshift, for he is convinced that their source lies in personal immorality. Their elimination, therefore, requires a higher personal morality, towards which "the most necessary requisite is a revival of genuine religion" (p. 433). Typical of his argument is an omission of any discussion of the population question, evidently upon the ground that numbers are not, or should not be, subject to human control. In fact, despite elaborate arguments, it is evident that the real questions at issue are all contained in his assumptions. The volume bears the *nil obstat* and *imprimatur* of the church.

Professor Kleene's volume must be classified as a contribution to economic criticism. He passes in review the various systems of distribution which have been advanced in recent years. His attention falls largely upon their assumptions and implications. He exposes the inadequacy of the rationalistic and utilitarian bases from which such schools as the Austrian, the American productivity, and their many variants proceed, protests against the assumption that the problem of distribution is contained in the problem of value, and insists that by implication modern "positive" schools justify the existing order. On its constructive side the book is fragmentary and lacks coherence. It doubtless will prove useful both to those who are insisting upon a return of theory to the problems and methods of classicism and to those who are demanding a newer institutional economics. If the book is far weaker as a constructive study than as a critical attack, the result is not evidence of personal weakness on the part of the author. Rather it affords testimony to the existing state of economic theory.

In view of their problems it is unfortunate that both volumes reveal a lack of

familiarity with the writings of the school of English economists who recently have been giving their attention to the subject of welfare, and who of all current theorists seem to be most fully conscious of what they are doing.

WALTON H. HAMILTON.

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SCHEFFTEL, YETTA. *The Taxation of Land Value*. Pp. xv, 489. Price, \$2.00. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1916.

Miss Schefftel has prepared a judicious, well-balanced treatment of land-value taxation in those countries where the scheme has been chiefly tried. The history of Australasian land taxes, German taxes on value increment, English land-value duties, and municipal land taxes in Canada is carefully outlined. Study is also given to the fiscal, economic and social effects of such taxes.

Although single taxers have generally welcomed the adoption of land-value taxation as a vindication of their doctrines, the author points out that "not only in method of assessment and levy, but also in their rationale great differences exist" between the single tax and land-value taxes. Advocates of the single tax urge their plan as "a weapon with which to clear the way to their Utopia," whereas land-value taxes have been adopted in part for fiscal purposes, in part for social reform. Nor is the difference between the two systems one of degree merely: "the doctrine of abolishing all (other) taxes is foreign to the principle of the tax on land value, as is the confiscatory feature of the single tax."

The conclusion is reached that land-value taxes have failed to produce *vital* social reform. Only to a brief extent have they checked land speculation, reduced rents or ameliorated housing conditions. On the fiscal side their success has been somewhat more pronounced.

The final chapter in the volume deals with the expediency of taxes on land value in the United States. A valuable bibliography is appended.

F. T. S.

POLITICAL SCIENCE

BIGELOW, JOHN. *Breaches of Anglo-American Treaties*. Pp. xi. 248. Price, \$1.50. New York: Sturgis and Walton Company, 1917.

Major Bigelow attempts to defend the United States against charges made by certain English newspapers and authors that the policy of the American government has been to regard treaties as binding only when it suits its convenience to observe them. He reviews in turn the history of all treaties, conventions and other agreements that have been concluded between the United States and Great Britain since the beginning of our national existence, violations of which by either of the contracting parties have been alleged, examines the infractions charged in each case and strikes a balance of the accounts with a view to determining which party has been the greater offender. The result of his findings is that during the one hundred and thirty years between 1783 and 1913 about thirty separate and distinct compacts that may properly be considered as treaties were entered into